

**Easterling, Deborah**

229584

**From:** Easterling, Deborah  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 26, 2011 3:03 PM  
**To:** 'allen prather'  
**Subject:** RE: Letter of Protest 2011-47-WS

Dear Mr. Prather:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your email to our PSC Website Comments.

I am forwarding your email to our Clerk's Office for handling. Your email will become a part of Docket No. 2011-47-WS and will be posted on our website under this Docket.

Please let me know if you should require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Deborah Easterling

**From:** allen prather [<mailto:waprather@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 26, 2011 8:51 AM  
**To:** Contact  
**Subject:** Letter of Protest 2011-47-WS

Attached is my letter of protest for Docket 2011-47-WS

Thank you  
Allen Prather

RECEIVED

PSC SC  
MAIL / DMS



**Letter of Protest**  
**in Docket \* 2011 - 47 - WS**

**Print**

**Email**

\* Required Fields

Date: \* May 26, 2011

**Protestant Information:**

Name \* Allen Prather

Mailing Address \* 221 Cedar Vale Dr

City, State Zip \* Lexington, 29073 Phone \* 803-795-2011

E-mail waprather@gmail.com

**1. What is your connection or interest in this case? \* For example, are you a customer of the Company that is the subject of this pending proceeding? (This section must be completed. Attach additional information if necessary.)**

For one year I have been a customer of Utilities Inc. in the Greyland Forest sub-division in Lexington County.

**2. Please give a concise statement of your protest. \* (This section must be completed. Attach additional information if necessary.)**

\*\*\*\*PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT\*\*\*\*

**3. Do you wish to make an appearance at a hearing in this proceeding , if scheduled, and offer sworn testimony? \***  
(This section should be completed.)

I would like to attend a hearing, but would not offer a sworn testimony.

My wife and I are a household of two. Our average water use over the past year per capita is 82gpd (gallons per day), below the Lexington County\* and national average\* of 150gpd and 151gpd, respectively. We use Energy Star appliances and do not water our lawn. We try our best to respect the environment and strive to use this valuable resource responsibly, and justly. We simply expect the same in return. I am certain there are many costs involved in getting water to customers and I would support a "just" and "reasonable" increase in my cost. However, a 43% increase in my monthly water bill is absolutely unacceptable.

I could argue points about production efficiency, cutting cost, water quality, etc., which are all important, but for me it comes down to what is morally and lawfully right. Utilities, Inc. purchases its water from West Columbia, the 15<sup>th</sup> largest public water supply in the state, deriving its water from Lake Murray and the Saluda River\*. Is it ethical to charge such high margins on an obviously abundant water supply when it only passes hands? Is it moral and lawful to make exuberant profits off of the most vital necessity to life on earth, water? I suppose if you are in the business to make money, which is what Utilities, Inc. is bound by law to do for their shareholders, then it makes sense.

Do I have a choice in who I purchase water from in my area? Better yet, if cost of production is going to drive prices up, then what happens if customers started to cut back on use? Are prices going to go up further still because Utilities, Inc.'s revenue comes from sales?

Over the past ten years, I have lived in four residences throughout Richland and Lexington counties. Currently, my Utilities, Inc. bill is more than twice the average water and sewer bill in those other areas. This issue is not due to the fact that I am now married and use twice as much water. In fact, if I did not use a drop of water for a month from Utilities, Inc., my bill would still be the same or more when compared to the previous homes I have lived in. Is this "just?"

Averaging \$80 monthly at CURRENT Utilities, Inc. pricing, our water and sewer bill already costs as much as, or more than any individual cell phone, cable, internet, or car insurance bill that we have. To put this new proposal into perspective for your average taxpaying Lexington County citizen, the increase will raise my water and sewer bill to 16% the total cost of my monthly mortgage. A 43% increase would make this bill the 4<sup>th</sup>, and at certain times of the year, 3<sup>rd</sup> most expensive bill I have, just behind a mortgage, car loan, and power.

One year ago we were looking for a new home in an established, yet, affordable neighborhood located in a good school district. Given this rate hike, we would have been forced to take into significant consideration the cost of a monthly water and sewer service aside from a general utilities budget. Water should be for people, not for profit. You are making a decision that will affect livelihoods. I hope you will take these honest and accurate facts into consideration upon making that decision.

Signed,  
Allen Prather

\* "The 100 Largest Public Water Supplies in South Carolina-2000"  
State South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Div. Report 21 - 2000

\*[www.data360.org](http://www.data360.org)